

the laws and administration of his adopted state were reorganized and the foundations laid for the eventual victory of Ch'in over its rivals.

The other six of the seven leading states were, in B.C. 333, brought together in a league to resist the prosperous Ch'in. This immediate period is often known as that of the Six Kingdoms.

The alliance was not permanent, partly because its members were too jealous of each other long to hold together. With this league is associated a famous historical romance which attributes the enterprise to Su Ch'in, one of the wandering scholar-diplomats of the time and which assigns the undoing of the alliance to a former fellow-student of Su Ch'in, Chang I, in the service of Ch'in.

Many were the wars and the exploits of these troubled years, and many a story has been handed down of loyalty, of trickery and intrigue, of prowess, and of generals and statesmen successful to-day and disgraced and banished or executed tomorrow. One of the festivals of a later China, that of the Dragon Boat, is said (probably erroneously) to take its rise from the search for the body of Ch'u Yuan, a statesman of Ch'u, who is declared to have drowned himself (B.C. 295) in despair over the failure of his prince to take his advice against the schemes of the astute Chang I.

For a time it seemed that China might never be unified, but be divided permanently among Ch'i, Ch'u, and Ch'in. In the third century Ch'in and Ch'i, in recognizing each other's spheres of influence, ratified the assumption by the two rulers of an ancient religious title, *Ti*, declared by legend to have been held by early sovereigns, the head of Ch'in becoming *Hsi Ti*, or Emperor of the West, and the head of Ch'i becoming *Tung Ti*, or

Emperor of the East. They soon abandoned these designations, possibly because of the widespread opposition of their neighbors, but the pretensions they embodied were probably still cherished.

Gradually, however, and with occasional reverses, Ch'in forged its way to the front. Toward the close of the fourth century it obtained possession of two passes which insured it free exit eastward and southward. Its military organization seems to have given it an advantage. Instead of depending on chariots, the familiar war vehicle of the older China still relied on by its rivals, it formed an army in which horse and foot soldiers predominated.